

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01

PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 DRC-01

/112 W

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P 111340Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECNAV WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 1494

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK PRIORITY

CNO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

DOD/ISA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0726

E.O. 11652 :GDS

TAGS : (MIDDENDORF, J. WILLIAM)

SUBJECT : SECNAV VISIT TO BAHRAIN

1. SECRETARY OF NAVY MIDDENDORF PAID MOST WELCOME AND HELPFUL BRIEF VISIT BAHRAIN SEPTEMBER 10, CALLING ON AMIR, WITH PRIME MINISTER AND DEVELOPMENT MINISTER (ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER) SHIRAWI PRESENT. PRIOR DEPARTURE, AFTER INSPECTING MIDDLE EAST FORCE FACILITIES AND SHIPS, HAD THIRTY MINUTE AIRPORT MEETING WITH SHIRAWI TO CONTINUE DISCUSSION ARISING DURING CALL ON AMIR.

2. SUBSTANTIVE PART OF TALK WITH AMIR BEGAN WITH SECRETARY MAKING MOST EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION ALONG GENERAL LINES PARA 3B MANAMA 0710. AMIR IN RESPONSE STRESSED LONGSTANDING BAHRAINI FRIENDSHIP FOR U.S., DESIRE FOR EVEN CLOSER RELATIONS, DELIGHT AT SECRETARY'S VISIT AND DESIRE TO SEE MORE HIGH LEVEL U.S. VISITORS, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING SECRETARY KISSINGER. ALSO NOTED BAHRAIN'S PLEASURE WITH CLOSE US-SAUDI RELATIONS, CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPORTANCE BAHRAIN ATTACHES TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL

NEIGHBORS (SINGLING OUT SAUDI ARABI), AND CUSTOMARY CAUTION THAT DESPITE "DETENTE" U.S. SHOULD KEEP CLOSE WATCH ON SOVIET INTENTIONS IN MIDDLE EAST/GULF. AMIR EXPRESSED PARTICULAR PLEASURE, AND RELIEF, THAT UNDER PRESIDENT FORD EFFECTIVE U.S. SEARCH FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE WILL CONTINUE WITHOUT BASIC POLICY CHANGES.

3. IN USUAL BROAD-BRUSH FASHION AMIR SEVERAL TIMES REPEATED THAT GOB WANTS TO BE HELPFUL TO U.S. IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY BUT ALSO WANTS HELP FROM U.S. (I.E. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE). THEN PRIME MINISTER TOOK OVER FOR TEN MINUTE EXPOSITION ALONG FAMILIAR LINES: BAHRAIN CONSIDERS ITSELF, ALONG WITH SAUDI ARABIA, BEST FRIEND OF U.S. IN ARAB WORLD AND IS WILLING TAKE SOME ARAB CRITICISM FOR MAINTAINING THIS FREINDSHIP. U.S. NAVY MOST WELCOME HERE; THERE ARE "DETAILS" TO WORK OUT. THIS LESS IMPORTANT THAN FACT BAHRAIN IN RETURN FOR FRIENDSHIP TOWARD U.S. NEEDS SOME VISIBLE EVIDENCE U.S. SUPPORTING "STRENGHTENING" OF BAHRAIN SOCIAL/ECONOMIC FABRIC. GOB HAS DETERMINED U.S. HELP IN AREA OF ADVISORY ASSISTANCE IS MOST HELPFUL CONTRIBUTION RU.S. CAN MAKE, AND NEEDS THIS TO JUSTIFY AT HOME AND IN AREA ITS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S., MANIFESTED BY U.S. NAVY PRESENCE HERE.

4. AT AIRPORT MEETING SHIRAWI EXPOUNDED AT GREATER LENGTH ON RELATIONSHIP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND NAVY PRESENCE AND WHAT SORT OF "SALARY TOPPING" HELP GOB WANTS (SEE MANAMA 0723). HE PROMISED TO GIVE US MORE PRECISE IDEA OF FIRST "3-5" EXPERTS NEEDED IN NEXT FEW DAYS. ENDED WITH PLEA THAT SECRETARY MIDDENDORF DO WHATHE COULD IN WASHINGTON TO ENCOURAGE HELPFUL USG RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST.

5. COMMENT: SECRETARY MIDDENDORF WAS OF GREAT HELP TO US HERE IN FURTHERING CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE FOR ONGOING DISCUSSIONS MIDEASTFOR STATUS. BEYOND THAT, HE MADE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING GOB'S FELT NEED FOR CLOSER CONTACT WITH U.S. I AM CERTAIN GOB APPRECIATES HIS VISIT AS MUCH AS ADMIRAL HANKS AND I DO.
TWINAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MANAMA00726
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740253-0321
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740956/aaaabvjt.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUN 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <12 MAR 2003 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : SECNAV VISIT TO BAHRAIN
TAGS: OVIP, BA, US, (MIDDENDORF, J WILLIAM)
To: USN STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005